IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): A payment system for controlling [[the]] continued use of a software program by a user, comprising:

a terminal configured to access software stored on a computer readable storage linked thereto, and including control means for analyzing conditions based on previous use of the software to determine whether a further for determining if a payment relating to the software is required for continued use, and configured to generate and transmit a first message, which is an offer message, containing at least an identity of the software owner, offer parameters and a digital signature of the software owner for at least part of the offer parameters;

payment module linked to the terminal and configured to receive the first message, display the first message, receive an acceptance of the software user, compose a second message requesting payment which includes at least the identity of the user and of the software owner together with proof of the user acceptance, and configured to transmit the second message; and

message and payment processing system configured to receive the second message, verify the proof of user acceptance, record the payment request with at least the identity of the user and of the software owner and the amount to be paid, credit the owner with the amount to be paid, configured to compose a third message which serves as a payment settlement message, the third message containing at least the identity of the message and payment processing system and a digital signature for proof of payment; and to transmit the third message therefrom,

wherein the payment module is configured to receive the third message and to

transmit to the control means of the terminal, the control means verifying the digital signature

for proof of payment relative to the offer parameters of the first message and authorizing use

of the software program upon verification.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The system in accordance with claim 23, whereby

the digital signature of the owner of at least part of the offer, and the digital signature for

proof of payment are both public key signatures with certification trees, so that an authority

defines a [[the]] root of the certification tree containing the system's different system

participants, notably including a software owner and the message and payment processing

system server, and one or more certificates are attached to the first and third messages for

signature checking.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 23, whereby

the message and payment processing system further comprises:

a remote payment server linked to the payment module by a telecommunications

network, and whereby said remote payment server receives and processes the second

message and composes and sends the third message; the remote payment server calculates a

total consumption of each user for all software owners in order to impose payment by said

user and causes the sums owned to each software owner to be transferred by all of the users.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 23, whereby

the message and payment processing system further comprises:

secure means containing at least the identity of the user; said means are additionally

able to receive the second message, check the proof of the user acceptance, record the

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payment request and compose the third message, payment settlement message, transfer the

third message, and also includes a remote payment server able to credit the software owner.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The system in accordance with claim 26, whereby

the secure means include a smart card reader with a smart card containing the user's identity,

and whereby the reader and card are able to receive the second message, check the proof of

the user acceptance, record the payment request and compose the third message [[,]] .

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 27, whereby

the card is of a prepay type and contains a balance and whereby the card is able to debit the

balance with the request amount at each payment request.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 28, whereby

the prepay card message insert into the third message proof that the requested amount has

been debited from the card.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 28, whereby

the prepay card is able to update a file containing settled requests and corresponding

amounts, and whereby the payment settlement message is sent once this file has been

updated.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 30, whereby

the prepaid card is able to transfer the file to the remote payment server, for transferring

funds to the software owners.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 28, whereby the prepay card is of the electronic wallet type.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 27, whereby the card is of a post-pay type.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The system in accordance with claim 33, whereby the post-pay card update a file containing settled requests and corresponding amounts, and whereby the payment settlement message is sent once this file has been updated.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): A system in accordance with claim 34, whereby the file is transferred to the remote payment server transferring funds to the software owners.

Claim 36 (Currently Amended): A payment method for controlling continued use of a software program by a user, comprising:

analyzing conditions based on previous use of the software to determine whether a further for determining if a payment relating to the software is required for continued use;

generating a first message, which is an offer message, containing at least identity of the software owner, offer parameters and the owner's digital signature for at least part of the offer, and transmission of the said first message to a payment module of the terminal;

reception and display by the payment module of said first message;

reception by the payment module of an acceptance of the user; and,

composition by the payment module of a second message requesting payment, following the user acceptance, containing at least identity of the user and of the software owner together with proof that the user accepts the offer;

transmission by said module of said second message to message and payment

processing system;

reception by the payment module of a third message, which is a payment settlement

message, from the processing means of message and payment processing system; the third

message containing at least the identity of the message and payment and a digital signature

constituting proof of payment;

transmission by the payment module of said third message to control means of the

terminal;

verifying by the control means of the digital signature constituting proof of payment

against the offer parameters contained in the first message and

authorization of continuation of the use of the software program upon correct

verification.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): A terminal for enabling control of the continued use

of a software program the terminal comprises:

control means for analyzing conditions based on previous use of the software to

determine whether a further [[if]] payment is required for continued use;

for and for generating a first message offering use of the software; said first message

containing at least identity of the software owner, offer parameters and the digital signature

of the owner for at least part of the offer,

for transmitting the first message to a payment module of the terminal;

the payment module comprising:

receiving means for receiving the said first message,

display means for displaying the first message;

reception means for receiving the acceptance of the user;

constituting means of the payment module for constituting a second message

requesting payment, containing at least the identity of user and of the software owners

together with proof that the user accepts the offer;

transmission means for sending said second message from payment module to

message and payment processing means;

reception means of the payment module for receiving a third message, which is a

payment settlement message, from the of message and payment processing system; the third

message containing at least the identity of the of message and payment processing system and

a digital signature constituting proof of payment;

transmission means for resending by the payment module said third message to the

control means;

verifying means for verifying by the control means digital signature constituting proof

of payment against the offer parameters contained in the first message;

authorization means for authorizing continuation of the use of the software program in

case of verification.